

THE Christian History ;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival
of Religion in *Great Britain, America, &c.*

Saturday MAY 26. 1744. § N^o. 65.

*Account of the Revival of Religion at Middleborough
concluded.*

SO deeply affected was the pious Soul of Mr. *Thacher* with this wondrous Grace of God ; that on *Lord's-Day, Jan. 31. 1741, 2,* he desir'd with the Consent of his Church to keep a *Day of Thanksgiving* in Publick, on *Wednesday, Feb. 10.* for this extraordinary *Pouring out of the Spirit of God* in the *two Months* preceeding : it being apprehended that within that Time, there were in a Judgment of Charity near 100 Persons effectually convinced and converted ; and others, both Younger, Middle-aged and Elder, in a hopeful Way : And considering also that this great Grace of God was given the People upon keeping a *Day of Prayer* ; it was an additional Argument for them to make their answerable Acknowledgments, in keeping a *Day of Thanksgiving.* Which they freely complied with.

When the *Day* came, there was such a *great Snow Storm* as hinder'd many living at a Distance from coming. However a considerable Number wading thro' the Snow, repair'd to Mr. *Thacher's* House and filled it, where they kept the Day with great Joy and Praise : Mr. *Thacher* preaching from *Luk. 15. 24.* And they began to be merry. And so joyful was the *Day* to those who were present and so desirable to those who were hinder'd ; as they could not be satisfied without appointing and keeping another in the Meeting-House.

For several Years before the *Revival* ; Mr *Thacher* considering the prevailing Disposition of many of those who on *Lord's-Day* Noons, in the Interval of public Worship, either

N

tarried

carried at the *Meeting Place* or repaired to the *two or three nearest Houses*, to fall into vain or worldly Conversation, which both profan'd the holy Sabbath and had a Tendency to efface all serious Impressions from the Minds of the People; he lead the Church to appoint some of the gravest Men to oversee them in *those Intervals*, prevent all vain Discourse, and employ the Time in *Reading, Praying and Singing*: which was of considerable Service; tho' *then* this Method had rather only a *restraining* than a *quickning* Influence on the People. But upon this Revival, so many of the Brethren had made so quick a Progress in the *experimental Part of Piety*, and were so surprizingly excited; as they both prayed and read and sang with such unusual Freedom, Life and Fervour, as was very engaging & affecting to others: far greater Numbers chose to stay in the House at Noons: and the gracious Presence of CHRIST was remarkably with them, made them long more earnestly for the Return of the *Preacher*, and inclin'd them to receive him again with the greater Joy.

On *September 6. 1742*, Mr. *Thacher* writes,---' GOD's *Work* yet prevails among us: and blessed be GOD, there are yet many Tokens for Good on this *Zion*.---Pray, Pray for your unworthy Brother, that I may be sincere and faithful to the Death; &c.

We might give the Reader *Extracts* from others of his excellent *Letters*; containing some remarkable *Instances* of the Grace of GOD; especially one of an *Indian* and another of a *Child*. But we shall now only remind the Reader of his *Letter of June 30. 1743*, communicated to the Assembly of Pastors, met at *Boston* on *July 7. following*, order'd to be published with their *Testimony*, and printed in our *No. 22*: and give *the last* that ever he wrote; which was to two of his Children, just as he was going into his fatal Illness: and wherein you will see his usual Spirit, as follows,

Middleborough, April 9. 1744.

My dear Children,

AM glad to hear of you by -----, who I hope the LORD makes a Blessing to you. May the LORD sanctify your frequent bodily Infirmities to you; to wean you from the World; and engage you to such a Walk after the SPIRIT as may evidence your being in CHRIST JESUS. This must be the SPIRIT's dwelling in you: If any have not this SPIRIT, he is none of CHRIST's: Where this SPIRIT dwells,

dwells, he sanctifies ; there is Liberty ; there is Prayer ; there is a constant Bent of Soul to Holiness ; there is Humility and Abasement ; there is a spiritual Mind ; there is a Disposition to live and speak the Praises of God. Take Heed of grieving the SPIRIT ; because he only can sanctify you, can seal you, can comfort you : You may grieve him by not hearkening to his Word, nor loving and meditating on it. Take Heed that you live together as Heirs ; yea, as Heirs together of Heaven ; so holily, temperately, blamelessly : Constantly realizing the Approach of Death : Get Assurance where Death will leave you : Familiarize the Thoughts of Death ; that you don't start at it when it comes, tho' suddenly. I should be glad to see you here. May the LORD have you always in his Arms, and delight you with the Consolations of his Chosen.

I subscribe your loving Father,
PETER THACHER.

We shall close this Account from *Middleborough* with observing ; that when Mr. *Thacher* was ordained on Nov. 2. 1709, he was Minister of the *whole Town* ; there being no other religious Society in it but his own Church, and then there were but *nine male* and *eleven female Communicants*. About 1724 or 5, the *western* Part of the Town was set off for a *Precinct*, and the Communicants of Mr. *Thacher's* Church in the said *western* Part set off & form'd into another Church, of which the Rev. Mr. *Benjamin Ruggles* was ordained the Pastor : Mr. *Thacher* remaining Pastor of the Church in the *easterly Precinct* only. About 1734, the *north-easterly* Part of the said *easterly Precinct* was set off to *Halifax*, and *eight male & eleven female Communicants* dismiss'd from Mr. *Thacher's* Church to *Halifax*. And yet at Mr. *Thacher's* Decease there remain'd in his Church *three Hundred and forty three Communicants* ; of whom *one Hundred and seventy four* were added in the late Revival : Of the said 343, there are about 185 *Males*. And this is also remarkable, that whereas in the *ordinary* Excitations of Grace before this Time, there were more *Females* added than *Males*, as I suppose has been usual in other Churches ; but in this *extraordinary* Season, the Grace of GOD has surprizingly seized and subdued the hardiest *Men*, and more *Males* have been added here than of the tenderer Sex.

Extract of a Letter lately arrived, from the Rev. Mr. ROBE of Kilsyth, to the Rev. Mr. PRINCE.

Reverend and very dear Sir,

TO satisfy the Longing of the great Bridegroom's Friends, who rejoice to hear his Voice, and of other's hearing it, receive the following short Account of the Revival *here*.

Tho' the *discernable Awakening this Summer* be not so great as it was *last Year*; yet in *this Parish* it hath still continued: sometimes weekly, sometimes in two or three Weeks there have been Instances of Sinners *newly awakened*.

The *Lord's Supper* was given here Beginning of *July*; and again a second Time in the Middle of *August*, at the earnest Desire of many in the Congregation: which is extraordinary in this Church; where it is given but *once a Year*, unless in a *few Towns* where it is given *twice*. There were several awakened at both these Times; at the last there were about a *Dozen*. But what was most observable, that many had such Manifestations and Feelings of the Love of GOD shed abroad in their Hearts as they could not contain; but broke forth in loud weeping of Joy, accompanied with the high Praises of the infinitely and eternally glorious Redeemer. The Congregation was in a continual melting Frame during the Service, where upwards of *seventeen Hundred* received the Lord's Supper: Some of whom were Persons of noble Quality as to their worldly Station, but much more so by their Relation to the blessed Heir of all Things.

There have been few Communion Solemnities I have been at this Year but where there were some Instances of *Awakenings*. This is singular, that of all the Persons I have seen awakened since *February last*, and they are *not a few*, there were none of them under convulsive or hysteric Motions, so much objected against: and yet their Awakening sharp and severe. Some of them indeed cried out. Some were awakened at the giving the Lord's Supper End of *August* at *Torphichen*, a Parish *twelve Miles West* from *Edinburgh*, some of whom I saw. Some few were awakened at *Queen's Ferry*, about *six Miles West* from *Edinburgh* middle of *last Month*, upon the *Monday* after giving the Lord's Supper there, some of these I also saw.

The Lord's Supper was given at *Edinburgh, Glasgow* and *Aberdeen* upon the 23d of *October last*. I assisted at the giving

ing of it at *Edinburgh*, and found the *Revival of Religion* there to be *vastly beyond* what was told me. I was in *several* of the *Societies* of the *young People*, and *when I saw the Grace of GOD I was glad*. They tell me there are *above thirty Societies* of *young People* there *newly erected*; some of whom consist of *upwards of thirty*, all of them greedily desiring the Presence of *Ministers* with them and Instructions from them.

I have good Information from *Glasgow* that there was never such a Time known there for visible Concern and Liveliness. The Number of their *Communicants* was by *several Hundreds* increased.

This blessed Revival makes Progress and spreads but in a more silent Way than at first. What I wrote is but little in Comparison of what I might if Time allowed. I only add that here and by what I can learn in other Places, tho' there are some very few Instances of Apostacy or Backsliding; yet the Body of those who appeared to have had an Escape through Grace, continue to persevere and grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of *JESUS CHRIST* our LORD. Praise to the Keeper of *Israel* for it. I beg you'll salute for me good Mr. *Cooper*, by whose Hands I received Mr. *Edwards's* valuable Treatise. Grace, Mercy and Peace be unto you and yours from *GOD* our Father through *JESUS CHRIST* our LORD. This with much Respect, tho' abruptly, is from

Rev. and dear Sir,

Your most affectionate Brother and
humble Servant in our dearest Lord,

J^A. ROBE.

Kilfyth, Nov. 3. 1743.

ENGLAND and WALES.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. SYMS, at London, to a Friend in Boston.

Dear Sir,

London, Dec. 23. 1743.

I Cannot help acquainting you that the Work of our great and glorious *EMANUEL* goes on very prosperously in this Land universally. There are few or no Counties in *England* or *Wales* where there is not a Work begun: And I think
may

may venture to say, in every Place where there has been an *Awakening* it is carried on in a very desirable and hopeful Manner. The Gospel in this Day may be likened to *Fire set to well dried Fuel*: It no sooner touches but a Flame arises. What shall be the Issue of so great and glorious Appearance one may not be safe in determining: But surely it has much of the Appearance of the Glory of the latter Days; when it is said, *The Glory of the LORD shall cover the Earth as the Waters the Sea*, and the whole World shall burn like an Oven with that Flame of Love, Light and Life which JESUS himself came down to kindle. Even so LORD JESUS come quickly, Amen, Hallelujah!

Mr. *Whitefield* is lately gone a Circuit into the *west* and *north-west* Parts of *England*; and will shortly be in *Wales*; and in about a Month return to *London*. When if it shall please our Saviour to shew him his Way clear, he has Thots of embarking soon after for *America*. But he desired me to write you that he must first fulfil his Ministry in *these Parts*; and will then come by the Will, and doubt not but it will be in the Fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel of JESUS.

Mr. *Whitefield* desires most kind and hearty Love to you and all Friends, and all that love the Lord JESUS in Sincerity.

I am your affectionate

humble Servant in our Lord Jesus,

JOHN SYMS.

SOUTH-CAROLINA and GEORGIA.

Extract of a Letter from the Reverend Mr. SMITH of Charlestown, to the Rev. Mr. PRINCE.

Rev. and dear Sir,

I Was highly pleased to find such a Number of Ministers in *New-England* attesting to the glorious Work of divine Grace among you; so that I have promoted the reprinting an hundred Copies of their Testimony *here*. Indeed I wonder any Man who gives himself Leave to think seriously, should not thankfully acknowledge the *Hand and Mercy of God* so apparent in it.

I had the Opportunity of seeing much of these *divine Effusions* when at the *Orphan-House* in *Georgia*; which is truly a noble Institution, and what can never enough be recommended to the Charity of all Men, who love *CHRIST* and his *Poor*: Never was I so surprized before: The *Oeconomy*, the Order, the Piety, the Devotion of it exceeded the *Fame* of it, and my most raised Expectations. It has truly been such an *House of Mercy* already to so many, that were it demolished *To-morrow*, I should think the past Collections of Money well expended upon it. Being call'd to administer the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper* to them, one of the *Labourers* in particular was under such *Raptures* of Joy, and so overpower'd with a Sense of divine Love, that he was constrained to cry out and immediately retreat from the *Table*. And for my own Part, it look'd as tho' I were eating Bread in the *Kingdom of Heaven*. I do not then wonder that *Deists*, *Socinians*, *Arminians*, and *Carnalists*, so warmly express their Enmity to the *House*, the *Founder*, and the *Management*; endeavouring to hide its *Glory* under Clouds of Calumny and spiteful Misrepresentations. I expect Mr. *Whitefield* as soon as the Season is moderate enough to embark. May the Lord hasten and bless his Return to us! To which I promise myself your *Amen*.

I am, Rev. Sir, Your's most affectionately
JOSIAH SMITH.

Charlstown So. Carolina,
March 5. 1743,4.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Grant of the Orphan-House, to his Friend in Boston.

Dear Mr.-----

Charlstown, March 30. 1744.

I Have felt a Regard for you since the Time I was at your *Society*, and the other little Acquaintance I had with you when I was in *Boston* with Mr. *Whitefield*. Since he left us, I have liv'd at, and in the Service of the *Orphan-House* which I left above a *Week ago*. We enjoy a large Share of Health, but what is our great Comfort we have had a comfortable Outpouring of the Spirit of late, in our Family: Several are savingly converted; others built up; and others under Conviction. Join with us, dear Sir, and bless the *LORD* for these his Benefits conferred on us. Indeed I can say from
happy

happy Experience that a Day of God's Power in his Courts are better than a Thousand elsewhere. We expect our dear Mr. *Whitefield* over very soon. I condole your Loss of the dear Rev. Mr. *Cooper*. May it be sanctified to you, to all that now know the Want of him. Indeed the News affected my Heart.

Religion seems in general to be at a low Ebb in *Carolina*: But in *Charlestown* here are some who are singular for God and his Cause. A Society of Men meets twice a Week, and 'tis to be hoped for Edification. May the LORD bless both it, and yours. Mr. *Smith* labours in his Work, and wishes a happy Revival of Religion.

My affectionate Love to your Society. Brethren pray for me.

I am in great Haste, else might be more particular. With Love to all the Followers of our LORD, I am
your Friend and Servant in
our glorious Redeemer,

W. GRANT.



CORRECTIONS from No. 53. inclusively.

PAGE 2, Title, read *Distresses* and *Joys*.

p. 4. l. 9. r. *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* 18. 14.

p. 5. l. 17. r. *Psal.* 5. 14, 15, 16.

p. 13. l. 21. r. *HARVARD*, a Town of about a 100 Families in the County of *Worcester*,

p. 28. l. 24, 25. r. *Ceylon* and *Java* in the *East-Indies*.

p. 29. l. 32. r. *Accounts* as follow.----

p. 37. l. 14, 15. r. Mr. *Lorrain's* Translation, (perused and approved by Dr. *Tillotson*) in the following Terms.

p. 45. l. 5. r. in an uncommon Manner.

p. 52. l. 8. r. and all he has is yours--

p. 53. l. 3. r. entering into your Souls;

p. 55. l. 18. r. Respecters of Persons

p. 69. l. 9. r. makes this clear

l. 11. r. *suasiones*

p. 71. l. 5. r. Instruction.

p. 78. l. 9. r. *July 3. 1706*,

p. 80. l. 4 from Bottom,--- r. and suffering bitter

p. 85. l. 19. r. one of his Children

p. 87. l. 14. r. *Sirach*

p. 93. l. 11. from Bottom,---r. with so much Grace,